

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Amended) Pigments of silica-iron oxide comprising a silica component (SiO_2) obtained from microsilica, having a ratio of silica that ranges between 70 and 98% by weight, and a ratio of iron oxide that ranges between 2 and 30% by weight.

2. (Amended) A process for obtaining pigments of claim 1, comprising the following steps:

- a) blending majority and minority raw materials containing microsilica and iron oxide, respectively, to form a blend of raw materials,
- b) agglomerating the blend of raw materials,
- c) calcinating in an oven the agglomerated blend with a thermal cycle at temperatures between 800 and 1300°C, with residence times ranging between 1 and 24 h, to obtain a pigment,
- d) blending the pigment to obtain a blend of pigment having particles with a particle size,
- e) reducing the particle size of the obtained blend of pigment, and
- f) final blending with control of chromaticity coordinates of the pigment.

3. (Amended) A process according to claim 2, in which stages a) and/or b) are carried out in dry conditions.

4. (Amended) A process according to claim 2, in which stages a) and/or b) are carried out in wet conditions.

6. (Twice amended) A process according to claim 4, in which the mixture from stage a) is carried out by dispersion.

8. (Twice amended) A process according to claim 6, in which the agglomeration of stage b) consists of drying by atomization.

10. (Twice amended) A process according to claim 2, in which, after stage c), there is a cooling step, prior to blending of the resulting pigment.

11. (Twice amended) A process according to claim 2, in which step e) consists of grinding or milling.

13. (Amended) A process for the manufacture of inorganic pigments and/or colorants, comprising adding microsilica as a source of SiO_2 to said inorganic pigments and/or colorants during manufacture thereof.

15. (Twice amended) A process according to claim 13, wherein the silica is obtained from condensation of gases evolved during the manufacture of silicon metal and/or alloys thereof.

16. (Twice amended) A process for the manufacture of compositions of enamels, glasses, ceramics, cements, plastics, laminates, graphic inks or rubber, comprising adding the pigments of claim 1, alone or in blends with other materials, as ingredients to said compositions of enamels, glasses, ceramics, cements, plastics, laminates, graphic inks or rubber.

17. (Twice Amended) A process for decorating the surface of enamels, glasses, ceramics, cements, plastics, laminates, graphic inks or rubber, comprising using the pigments of claim 1, alone or in blends with other materials, in the surface decoration of enamels, glasses, ceramics, cements, plastics, laminates, graphic inks or rubber.

18. (Twice Amended) A ceramic product including in its composition the pigments of claim 1.

19. (Amended) A ceramic product in accordance with claim 18, wherein the product consists of a porcelain stoneware.

20. (Amended) A porcelain stoneware in accordance with claim 19, comprising chromatic coordinates (Hunter-LAB) in the following ranges: $L = 36-46$, $a = 10-18$ and $b = 7-11$, for a percentage pigment of 2% that gives a colour of red-orange tone.

A complete copy of the amended claims, marked-up to indicate the amendments effected, is attached hereto as Attachment A. A clean copy of the full set of amended claims is attached as Attachment B.